



During a visit to the Vermont Foodbank on Monday, Rep. Peter Welch highlighted the rise of hunger in Vermont and urged the federal government to take a comprehensive approach to ending hunger throughout the country.

Welch's visit to the Foodbank followed the release of a new U.S. Department of Agriculture report showing that 12.1 percent of Vermont households were food insecure for part of 2008 – up from 8.8 percent a decade ago. In the same time period, the number of Vermont households struggling with severe hunger jumped from 2.7 percent to 5.7 percent.

Welch praised the work of the Vermont Foodbank, which plans to distribute 8 million pounds of food this year, as well as the local organizations that distribute food directly to Vermont families. He called on the federal government to adopt a multi-faceted, comprehensive approach to ending hunger – by coordinating federal efforts and increasing funding.

- [Click here](#) to donate to the Vermont Foodbank
- [Click here](#) to find a food shelf in your area
- [Click here](#) to learn more about the Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger.

“It is simply unacceptable that thousands of children, adults and seniors are going hungry in this state,” Welch said. “Organizations like the Vermont Foodbank are doing an admirable job of providing assistance to those with the greatest need – and Vermonters’ contributions to their local food shelves go a long way. But hunger is a national problem and deserves far more attention at the federal level.”

A member of the House Hunger Caucus, Welch is a cosponsor of the Roadmap to End Global Hunger and Promote Food Security Act (H.R. 2817). The bill would create a White House Office on Global Hunger to coordinate federal efforts and carry out a government-wide strategy to end hunger. The bill also creates funding targets to increase investment in agricultural development, nutrition, school food programs, safety net programs and emergency response.



Joining Welch for the discussion were Vermont Foodbank CEO John Sayles and Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger Executive Director Marissa Parisi. Following the event, Welch volunteered at the Foodbank and encouraged others to do the same.

“The USDA Household Food Security numbers are alarming and reflect the 35-40% increase in demand for charitable food that the Vermont Foodbank and our network partners have seen during the last 10 months,” Sayles said. “During this holiday season, we are urging all Vermonters to get involved in the fight against hunger — volunteer, advocate, donate.”

Parisi said, “Hunger is an injustice that shouldn’t exist in Vermont. We need a comprehensive approach at the state and federal level that supports the economy, increases wages, and strengthens federal nutrition programs like 3SquaresVT (formerly food stamps) and free school meals.”

- [Read about](#) Rep. Welch’s visit in the Times Argus
- [Read about](#) Rep. Welch’s visit from the Associated Press
- [Click here](#) for more photos of Rep. Welch’s visit to the Vermont Foodbank